

FROM THE CHAIR...

A Monthly Roundup of News from the Chair of the Sullivan County Legislature

TAKING
ON



CORONAVIRUS

**BY ROBERT A. DOHERTY, CHAIRMAN
SULLIVAN COUNTY LEGISLATURE**

This is a surreal time, for sure. It's safe to say that none of us have ever experienced the kind of health, economic and social impacts COVID-19 has brought, not just to Sullivan County, but the entire world. People are confused, scared, worried, and they're looking to us for answers. I wish I had answers for everyone about everything (it would make my life easier!). Obviously, I don't. But I can say that your County government is working hard to find answers, ones we can share with you to make your lives at least a little bit better, safer, and more informed. I'll talk about some of those answers on the following pages. You may not always like the answers we share. I get that. But I ask you to have faith that we are doing the best we can for you, for us, for everyone.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- KEEPING YOU SAFE - 3*
- KEEPING YOU INFORMED - 4*
- MEET OUR NEXT ATTORNEY - 4*



WE'VE GOT A WHOLE COUNTY TO HELP

Yeah, I've been recovering from major surgery, and maybe I shouldn't be up and out as much as I am, but I can't sit back and watch people suffer when I can do something about it. And so, with my friend and current District Attorney Meagan Galligan, I've been traipsing across my district (that's District 1) to make sure folks get what they need - not just food, but a helping hand...



NARROWSBURG

Chairman Doherty, left, slinging bags of food at the Bags of Hope weekly giveaway in Narrowsburg, to which he donated \$1,100



ELDRED

From left, Doherty, DA Galligan and Barryville Farmers Market Manager Johnny Pizzolato donate boxes of non-perishables and canned goods to Eldred School Nurse Tracy Whitney, who runs the Backpack Program



BARRYVILLE

Chairman Rob Doherty with herbs being shared at the Barryville Farmers' Market



District Attorney Meagan Galligan placing in a trunk a bag of fresh food from Wild Yarrow Farm in Cochetton

EOC? WHAT'S THAT?

Sometimes government gets a little slap-happy with acronyms. For every well-known "FBI," there's "DHSES." (Go ahead - look it up. It does exist!)

Here's one that's easy to learn and remember, though: EOC. That stands for Emergency Operations Center, and it's basically the HQ (c'mon, you know that one!) of our coronavirus response effort. Located not far from the County Airport, the EOC is tasked with effectively managing emergencies as they arise. As a result, it typically is manned by our core Incident Command System team, led by Incident Commander and Deputy County Manager John Liddle, a Navy veteran. John and his small team of just over half a dozen County employees have spent more time at the EOC than anyone before them. After all, this hasn't been like a flood or tornado or snowstorm. COVID-19 just won't go away as fast.

But the tasks in many ways are the same: track the damage, help the injured,

MANAGING EMERGENCIES

coordinate supplies and support for first responders, work with State and Federal response teams, and ensure all County resources are focused on recovery. It's the nucleus of our crisis combat efforts.



EMERGENCY SERVICES TRAINING CENTER

MEET THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

I'm happy to say that Michael McGuire, most recently a Sullivan County Court Judge, will soon be the Sullivan County Attorney. He begins May 4.

Mike is an impressive guy: former judge, assistant district attorney, and athletic director during some of SUNY Sullivan's legendary years at the top of the NJCAA rankings. But what really impressed me - and the majority of legislators who agreed to bring him on - is his knowledge of the law. Coupled with a no-nonsense attitude and a relentless work ethic, Mike is just the kind of County Attorney we need. He'll stand up for us amidst the many (often frivolous) lawsuits that come our way. He won't back down in the face of bullies and scammers. He'll vigorously protect our rights and your tax dollars every day. He'll win back for us much more funds than what we pay him, and he'll do it tirelessly.

I'm very glad we have him on our team!



Sullivan County Attorney Michael McGuire, second from right, with his outdoors-oriented son Carl, wife Corinne and son Kevin

TUNE IN TO OUR TOWN HALLS



If you haven't had a chance yet to watch one of our Facebook Town Hall Q&As, you're missing a lot.

We've already had close to a dozen Town Halls, an idea I developed with our leadership team to give you the latest, most informative and most interesting data about COVID-19 in Sullivan County. It's drawn an average of 4,000 viewers every time, and that's because we don't just tell you what we know - we answer your questions, too.

For the ones you missed, visit our Coronavirus Info page at www.sullivanny.us where we have a complete archive. Then make sure to tune in every Monday and Thursday at 1 p.m. to www.facebook.com/SullivanCountyGov for the newest Town Halls. I guarantee you'll learn something!

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

- **Looking for the Chairman?**
845-807-0435 or
Robert.Doherty@co.sullivan.ny.us
- **General question? 845-794-3000**
- **Need a specific name or number?**
www.sullivanny.us/countydirectory



A Note to Our Laid Off Employees

This is for the 78 of you who will no longer be in the County's employ come May 2. I'm not asking you to not be upset. I'm not telling you to not be concerned. And I wouldn't presume to tell you not to question what just happened. You're not idiots, and neither am I.

What I want you to know is that these layoffs weren't revenge for something you did or didn't do, nor should they be taken as a reflection of your performance or value to Sullivan County's citizens. I wish we could have kept every one of you (and added to the ranks, as we abolished many vacant positions). Your loss won't just be hard for you but for your coworkers & the people you so ably served. It will definitely be felt. It already hurts. As the State and Federal funding becomes clearer, so will our ability to predict what happens next. In the meantime, we're maintaining your health insurance, and I look forward to the day we can welcome you back. Because we do want you back.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO

Can't make the Legislature meetings to see what we're doing firsthand? I get it - you're working hard. So let us fill you in on our latest activities...

- **We set** two public hearings for June 18, starting at 9:40 a.m. - one for amendments to our Ethics Law, one for a new Human Rights Law. More info is coming on both of those (the draft HR Law is now at sullivanny.us), and hopefully we'll be able to hold the hearings in person.
- **We agreed** to sell (and have since received a down-payment on) 4 acres of land behind the old Apollo Mall in Monticello to Apple Ice, an ice manufacturer who will convert an existing building for their use and, we hope, will spur activity at what may become an adjacent light industry park.
- **We extended** repayment terms for businesses in our Revolving Loan Fund for five months, without penalty, due to the pandemic. We also added \$50,000 to the Fund for that very reason.
- **We initiated** an Early Retirement Incentive Program to help offset a need for layoffs beyond the 78 we already enacted. Anyone over 60 with at least 15 years of service is eligible.